

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6964

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

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TOKYO FOR AMBASSADOR SAXBE

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US, PK

SUBJECT: CHAVAN SAYS ARMS TO PAKISTAN WOULD REPUDIATE US
ASSURANCES

1. IN EXTEMPORANEOUS ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOLLOWING A MORE
MODERATE FORMAL STATEMENT, FOREIGN MINISTER Y.B. CHAVAN TOLD
THE LOK SABHA THAT ANY DECISION BY THE UNITED STATES TO RESUME
SUPPLYING ARMS TO PAKISTAN WOULD BE CONTRARY TO THE ASSURANCES
GIVEN INDIAN BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE DURING THIS VISIT
LAST FALL AND WOULD HAVE HARMFUL EFFECTS. SPEAKING ON A
"CALLING ATTENTION NOTICE" ON FEBRUARY 18, THE MINISTER SAID INDIA
HAD REPEATEDLY OPPOSED THE BALANCE OF POWER PRINCIPLE ONCE
PURSUED BY THE UNITED STATES ON THE SUB-CONTINENT. CHAVAN SAID
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THE GOI HAD WARNED THE US EVEN BEFORE THE BHUTTO VISIT OF THE

SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF RESUMING THE ARMS SUPPLY. THE MINISTER ASSERTED THAT THE SUPPLY OF US ARMS TO PAKISTAN NOW WOULD IN NO WAY REDUCE THE CAPACITY OF INDIAN TO PROTECT ITS OWN INDEPENDENCE. THE WORLD AND INDIA'S NEIGHBORS KNOW THAT INDIAN IS QUITE CAPABLE OF PROTECTING ITS OWN INDEPENDENCE, CHAVAN SAID. HE ADDED THAT ANY REVIVAL OF ARMS SUPPLY BY THE UNITED STATES TO PAKISTAN WOULD NOT ONLY CREATE NEW TENSIONS BETWEEN INDIAN AND PAKISTAN BUT ALSO REVIVE OLD MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE U. S. ROLE IN THE REGION.

2. SPEAKING TO THE RAJYA SABHA LATER THE SAME DAY, SHAVAN SAID ACCORDING TO INDIAN WIRE SERVICES THAT IF HIS VISIT TO THE US TO ATTEND THE INDO-US JOINT COMMISSION MATERIALISED, HE WOULD USE THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPRESS UPON THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT INDIA'S STRONG FEELING AGAINST THEIR REPORTED DECISION TO SUPPLY ARMS TO PAKISTAN. CHAVAN ADDED THAT NO ECONOMIC AID WAS GOING TO DETER INDIAN FROM ITS STAND ON US ARMS SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN. THE MINISTER SAID THAT IF THE US DID NOT KEEP ITS WORD, WE WILL HAVE TO TAKE UP OUR OWN POSITION. RESPONDING TO A QUESTION, CHAVAN SAID THAT THE US GOVERNMENT HAS YET TO CONVEY ITS FORMAL RESPONSE TO HIS LETTER WRITTEN IN JANUARY ON THE REPORTED AMERICAN DECISION TO SUPPLY ARMS TO PAKISTAN.

3. FULL
TEXT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OPENING STATEMENT TO THE
LOK SABHA FOLLOWS:

4. QUOTE: GOVERNMENT OF INDIAN HAS RECEIVED REPORTS THAT THE UNITED STATES IS CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF RESUMING ARMS SUPPLIES TO PAKISTAN. PRESS DESPATCHES FROM WASHINGTON AND ISLAMABAD HAVE ALSO HINTED THAT THE 10-YEAR OLD AMERICAN ARMS EMBARGO MAY BE LIFTED AND THAT THE UNITED STATES MAY SUPPLY SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS TO PAKISTAN. ACCORDING TO YOUR INFORMATION, THIS QUESTION WAS ALSO DISCUSSED DURING PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO WASHINGTON ON 5TH AND 6TH FEBRUARY ALTHOUGH NO DECISION HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED.

5. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIAN VIEWS THE SUPPLY OF AMERICAN WEAPONS TO PAKISTAN WITH GRAVE CONCERN AS IT WILL HAVE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS ON THE PEACE AND STABILITY OF SUB-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONTINENT. WE HAVE TAKEN UP THIS MATTER WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL AND HAVE BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REVERSAL OF THEIR PRESENT POLICY ON THE PROCESS OF NORMALISATION ON THE SUB-CONTINENT. ON 28TH JANUARY, I ADDRESSED A LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON THIS SUBJECT AND CONVEYED TO HIM OUR DEEP CONCERN ABOUT THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF ARMS SUPPLIES TO PAKISTAN ON THE PEACE OF THIS REGION AS WELL AS ON INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS. I

PARTICULARLY EMPHASISED THAT PAKISTAN'S FEARS ABOUT A MILITARY THREAT FROM INDIAN ARE WHOLLY FANCIFUL AND UNWARRANTED AS BOTH INDIA AND PAKISTAN ARE COMMITTED IN THE SIMLA AGREEMENT TO WORK FOR FRIENDLY AND HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DURABLE PEACE IN THE SUB-CONTINENT AND SETTLE ALL THEIR DIFFERENCES THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS.

6. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN INDIA'S POLICY TO PROMOTE PEACE, STABILITY, COOPERATION AND GOOD-NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS AMONG THE COUNTRIES OF THIS AREA ON THE BASIS OF EQUALITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND RESPECT FOR INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ALL STATES. DESPITE THE UNFORTUNATE PAST, WE HAVE MADE SPECIAL EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT NORMALISATION AND RECONCILIATION WITH PAKISTAN. THANKS TO THESE EFFORTS, WE HAVE SUCCEEDED TO SOME EXTENT IN IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES IN SPITE OF THE SLOW PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SIMLA AGREEMENT. THESE HOPEFUL TREASURES WILL BE JEOPARDISED - AND THE PROMISE OF COOPERATION REPLACED BY THE SPECTRE OF CONFRONTATION - BY AN AMERICAN DECISION TO INDUCT SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS INTO THE SUB-CONTINENT. IT WILL NOT ONLY CREATE NEW TENSIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN BUT ALSO REVIVE OLD MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE UNITED STATES' ROLE IN THE REGION.

7. IN RECENT MONTHS, BOTH INDIAN AND THE UNITED STATES HAVE MADE SINCERE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THEIR RELATIONS. THE SECRETARY OF STATE HIMSELF STATED WHILE IN INDIA LAST YEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT WISH TO ENCOURAGE AN ARMS RACE IN THE SUB-CONTINENT. IN VIEW OF THE PAST HISTORY OF THE INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS, IT IS OUR EARNEST HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL CAREFULLY CONSIDER ALL IMPLICATIONS ITS DECISIONS TO SUPPLY WEAPONS TO PAKISTAN WILL HAVE ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. WE ALSO TRUST THAT THE UNITED STATES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GOVERNMENT WILL NOT REVERSE ITS PRESENT POLICY OF NON-INDUCTION OF WEAPONS INTO THE SUB-CONTINENT AS THIS WOULD NOT BE IN THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES, INDIA, PAKISTAN, OR PEACE OF THIS REGION. END QUOTE.

8. CHAVAN'S EXTEMPORANEOUS STATEMENTS, WHILE DRAWN FROM HIM IN DEBATE, REPRESENT THE STRONGEST REMARKS YET FROM A RESPONSIBLE FOREIGN POLICY SPOKESMAN FOR THE GOI ON THE POSSIBLE RESUMPTION OF US ARMS TO PAKISTAN.
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